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guide TO THE U.N. IN KOREA

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guide

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TO THE U.N. IN KOREA

A YEAR OF COLLECTIVE ACTION



DEPARTMENT OF STATE PUBLICATION 4299
FAR EASTERN SERIES 47 . . . RELEASED AUGUST 1951
DIVISION OF PUBLICATIONS . OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government
Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. — Price 15 cents

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United Nations in Korea: Soldiers of four member nations stand before the U.N. flag—an Australian, an American, a South Korean, a Filipino.

preface

IN July 1951 military representatives of the United Nations, Communist China, and the North Korean regime began a series of conferences to discuss an armistice in the year-old Korean conflict. During the year of this conflict much has happened—on the battlefield, in the councils of the United Nations, in the seats of governments all over the world, and, most important, in the minds of men.

The citizens of the United States have read and listened to millions of words on the Korean conflict—on everything from detailed reports of the fighting to hair-splitting arguments both within individual governments and in the United Nations. The detailed reports are important; so, perhaps, are the hair-splittings. But it is easy for the average person to lose his way, to wander down a side road of military logistics, or one concerned with a particular policy of a particular nation, or many a side road affecting political and economic factors of scores of countries.

Thus, the purpose of this guide: To take the reader down the broad highway of U. N. action in Korea; to look at the record, step by step; to review the extraordinary burdens a group of nations assumed—for the first time in the history of man—to uphold the principle that the peace of all depends on checking an aggressive assault against a single country. Over and above the strains and battles of ideas, the conflicting methods and approaches, the shifts in thinking, and the fortunes and misfortunes of the battlefield, the U. N. story in Korea remains a simple one: a collective action to stop an aggressor.

It is this basic fact—and the corollary selfish one that a fire running wild next door may well leap into your own domain—which is sometimes lost sight of as we all add and subtract the multitudinous currents of contemporary history. But the year-long road of facts of the United Nations in Korea, despite the twists and turns and distracting side roads, is broad and well lighted.

the U. N. is informed of an aggression

LITTLE better than one year ago, at 3 o'clock in the morning of June 25, 1950, the telephone rang in the New York suburban home of U.N. Secretary-General Trygve Lie. On the other end of the line was the U.S. Deputy Representative to the United Nations with an urgent message: From the American Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, the U.S. Department of State had received information that North Korean forces had invaded the territory of the Korean Republic.

It was thus, from an early-morning telephone call, that the United Nations was first officially informed that an act of aggression had been committed.

The report from Korea upon which the telephone message was based was sharp, factual: "According to Korean Army reports . . . North Korean forces invaded Republic of Korea territory at several points this morning. . . . Ongjin was blasted. . . . North Korean infantry commenced crossing the [38th] parallel . . . amphibious landing was reportedly made south of Kangnung on the east coast. Kaesong was reportedly captured. . . . North Korean forces, spearheaded by tanks, are reportedly closing in on Chunchon. Details of the fighting in the Kangnung area are unclear. . . ."

Then, in a short summary sentence, the report from Korea concluded: "*It would appear from the nature of the attack and the manner in which it was launched that it constitutes an all-out offensive against the Republic of Korea.*"

On the basis of this serious report the United States requested, in a formal note which followed the telephone call, that this message be brought "to the immediate attention of the President of the United Nations Security Council." The United States considered the assault upon the Republic of Korea as a breach of the peace and an act of aggression, and thus the prime business of a world organization dedicated to world peace.

The United Nations moved promptly. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day the Security Council was called to order. Meantime, however, the United Nations had before it a report on Korea from one of its own commissions—the United Nations Commission on Korea. This report—direct from Seoul—gave much the same information which had been received in Washington some hours previous, then added,

“At 17:15 hrs. four Yak-type aircraft strafed civilian and military air fields outside Seoul destroying planes, firing gas tanks and attacking jeeps. Yongdungpo railroad station on outskirts also strafed.

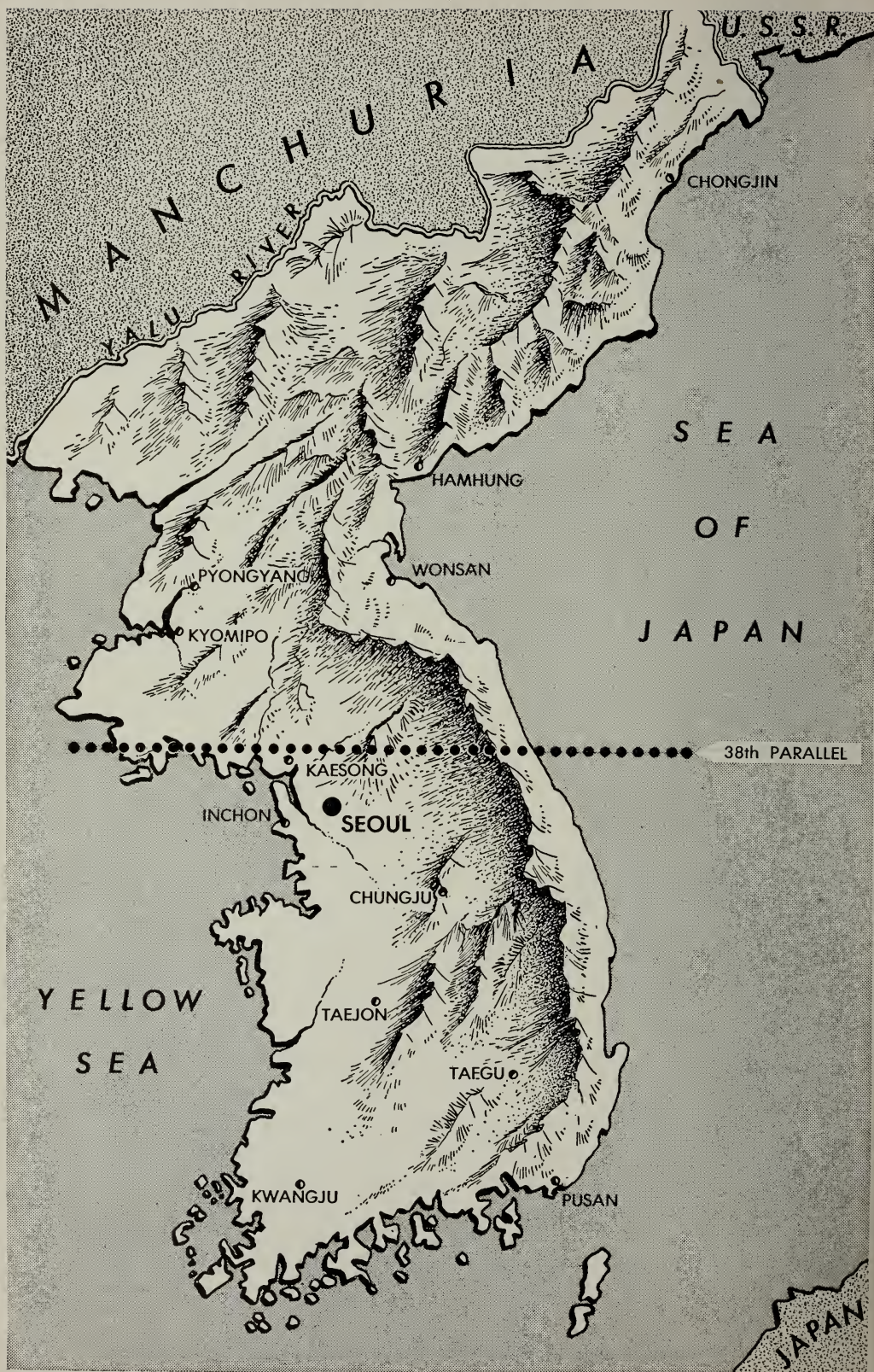
“Commission wishes to draw attention of Secretary-General to serious situation developing which is assuming character of full-scale war and may endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.”

Now the United Nations had before it two reports—one from a member nation, the other from a U.N. commission itself—which told that on a large peninsula jutting out from the northeast coast of Asia, on which lived about 30 million people, the peace had been shattered by armed and organized forces. It was time to act—and act quickly.

the 38th parallel and the republic of Korea

BEFORE relating U.N. actions, first, to bring about a withdrawal of the attacker and, when this failed, to meet his force with force, it might be well to take a look at Korea itself and the factors which brought about that most talked-of geographic marking—the 38th parallel.

The 38th parallel, as a demarcation line, came into being as a simple military expedient. At the end of World War II it was



decided that Japanese troops north of the 38th parallel would surrender to Soviet forces and those south of that line would surrender to United States forces. That was all. There was nothing in any records anywhere to indicate that Korea was to be divided into two parts. In 1943, at the Cairo conference, and again in the summer of 1945, at the Potsdam meeting, it was quite definitely agreed that, in due course, Korea would be a free and independent country. Those who so agreed: China, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the United States.

Yet, almost immediately after Japanese troops surrendered in Korea, the Soviet military command arbitrarily decided that the 38th parallel was a permanent line separating two military zones. The U.S. military command in southern Korea tried repeatedly to negotiate arrangements, all aimed at establishing the unity of the country, but could get nothing but a deaf ear from the Soviet military.

Thus matters stood until December 1945. Then at a Foreign Ministers meeting in Moscow the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and the United States agreed that a provisional Korean democratic government should be set up for all of Korea. To this end it was decided that the Soviet and U.S. military commands in Korea were to form a Joint Commission which, with Korean democratic parties and social organizations, was to make recommendations to the Big Four powers for an all-Korean government.

The U.S. command's attempts to get the Soviet Union to agree to some method to consolidate North and South Korea constitute a high mark in frustration. Time and time again the Soviet members of the Joint Commission blocked the planning for practical action. After nearly 2 years of effort all the U. S. command and the members of the Commission could get the Soviet Union to agree to was a spotty exchange of mail between North and South Korea.

the U. N. gets the Korean problem

IT was at this point that the United States, convinced that direct negotiations with the Soviet Union were futile, laid the whole Korean problem before the United Nations.

"Today the independence of Korea," said the U.S. message, "is no further advanced than it was two years ago. Korea remains divided. . . . There is little or no exchange of goods or services between the two zones. Korea's economy is thus crippled. . . .

"It is therefore the intention of the United States Government to present the problem of Korean independence to this session of the General Assembly. Although we shall be prepared to submit suggestions as to how the early attainment of Korean independence might be effected, we believe that this is a matter which now requires the impartial judgment of the other members. We do not wish to have the inability of two powers to reach agreement delay any further the urgent and rightful claims of the Korean people to independence."

That was on September 17, 1947. The subsequent history of how the United Nations took on the problem of Korea; how its representatives were denied entry north of the 38th parallel; the supervision of free elections in the southern zone; the establishment of the Republic of Korea with seats reserved for 100 representatives from the North as soon as elections could be held under the observation of a U.N. Commission; the approval of the new Republic by the United Nations and its recognition by more than 30 countries—all this has been told before.

Thus the Republic of Korea was not only the legal government of the Korean people; it was created under the auspices of the United Nations.

Korea remained divided. The United Nations, continuing its efforts, kept a commission in Korea working toward erasing that artificial line and uniting the country. But this U.N. commission could make little headway. Its representatives were not even

allowed to cross the 38th parallel, north of which there had been established a regime called the "Democratic People's Republic of Korea"—a government formed by a mere transfer of power from Soviet occupation authorities. "Elections"—if any occurred—were never allowed to be observed by United Nations representatives.

the U. N. acts

THUS, in brief, stood matters in Korea on June 25, 1950, when the Security Council met at 2 o'clock in the afternoon with those two fateful messages before it.

The United States promptly introduced a resolution for the Council's consideration. This resolution was revised, amended, cast into final form, and then passed by a vote of 9-0, with one member (Yugoslavia) not voting and another being absent. (The absent member was the Soviet Union, which had boycotted Security Council meetings since the previous January.)

The main points of this important U.N. resolution were:

The Republic of Korea was attacked by forces from North Korea; this action "constitutes a breach of the peace."

A call for the immediate cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal "forthwith" of all North Korean forces to the 38th parallel.

At the same time the resolution requested the U.N. Commission on Korea to report its recommendations on the situation and observe the withdrawal and also called upon all members of the United Nations to give every assistance "in the execution of this resolution and to refrain from giving assistance to the North Korean authorities."

During the next 2 days further reports from the U.N. Commission on Korea were received at U.N. headquarters. The following excerpts tell the story:

"For the past two years the North Korean regime has by violently abusive propaganda, by threatening gestures along the 38th parallel

and by encouraging and supporting subversive activities in the territory of the Republic of Korea pursued tactics designed to weaken and destroy the Government of the Republic of Korea established under the auspices of the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea and recognized by the General Assembly. During the same period the United Nations Commission on Korea has been the target for repeated propaganda broadcasts which denied its legality, dubbed it futile, and subjected its individual members to abuse. This campaign has been relentlessly pursued during the past 8 months. . . .”

“Commission met this morning 1000 hours and considered latest reports on hostilities and results direct observation along parallel by UNCOK Military Observers over period ending 48 hours before hostilities began. Commission’s present view on basis this evidence is, first, that judging from actual progress of operations Northern regime is carrying out well-planned, concerted, and full-scale invasion of South Korea, second, that South Korean forces were deployed on wholly defensive basis in all sectors of the parallel, and, third, that they were taken completely by surprise as they had no reason to believe from intelligence sources that invasion was imminent. . . .”

“North Korean advances have created dangerous situation with possibilities of rapid deterioration. Impossible estimate situation which will exist tomorrow in Seoul. In view Commission’s past experience and existing situation Commission convinced North Korea will not heed Council resolution nor accept UNCOK good offices.”

the resolution of June 27_____

ON June 27, after the Korean Republic appealed directly to the United Nations for assistance, the U. S. delegate, Warren R. Austin, spoke to his colleagues:

“It is clear that the authorities in North Korea have completely disregarded and flouted the decision of the Security Council. The

armed invasion of the Republic of Korea continues. This is, in fact, an attack on the United Nations itself. . . .

"It is difficult to imagine a more glaring example of disregard for the United Nations and for all the principles which it represents. The most important provisions of the Charter are those outlawing aggressive war. It is precisely these provisions which the North Korean authorities have violated.

"It is the plain duty of the Security Council to invoke stringent sanctions to restore international peace. . . ."

To restore that peace the United Nations that very afternoon—June 27, 1950—passed a resolution, a resolution which tells the whole story. Here it is in full:

"The Security Council,

"HAVING DETERMINED that the armed attack upon the Republic of Korea by forces from North Korea constitutes a breach of the peace,

"HAVING CALLED FOR an immediate cessation of hostilities, and

"HAVING CALLED UPON the authorities of North Korea to withdraw forthwith their armed forces to the 38th parallel, and

"HAVING NOTED from the report of the United Nations Commission for Korea that the authorities in North Korea have neither ceased hostilities nor withdrawn their armed forces to the 38th parallel and that urgent military measures are required to restore international peace and security, and

"HAVING NOTED the appeal from the Republic of Korea to the United Nations for immediate and effective steps to secure peace and security,

"*Recommends* that the Members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area."

Events continued to move swiftly. The United States, after the first U.N. resolution and after a direct appeal from the Republic of Korea, had authorized Gen. Douglas MacArthur in Tokyo to furnish the already hard pressed South Korean troops with military supplies. This was followed by orders to give the Korean Government forces air and sea cover and support.

Now, with the second important resolution, the U.N. Secretary-General dispatched urgent calls to all members of the United Nations asking to be advised of what type of assistance they were prepared to furnish to help a nation under the attack of an aggressor.

Fifty-three member nations, amidst popular acclaim throughout the free world, approved the Security Council's recommendations. Of the fifty-six nations which responded to the Council only three refused to go along with this great majority. These three were, of course, the Soviet Union and her satellites, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

The United States advised the United Nations that air components were ordered into action against military targets in North Korea, that her navy was to blockade the entire Korean coast; and on June 30 she announced that certain supporting ground troops were to go into action with South Korean forces.

Other U.N. members responded with pledges of aid ranging from fighting aircraft to foodstuffs. Some examples:

Australia—aircraft and naval vessels

Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand, and the Netherlands—
naval vessels

Denmark—medical supplies

India—field ambulance

Norway—transportation tonnage

The Philippines—food, vaccines, and other supplies

Chile—copper and other strategic materials

Sweden—field hospital unit

Thailand—foodstuffs

The United Nations itself, as an organization, had no forces to combat the North Korean aggressor. The establishment of such forces had long ago been blocked by Soviet intransigence. *Now the need for swift action was imperative to prevent the Republic of Korea from being overrun by the aggressive troops from the north.*

The Soviet Union, however, bluntly called the U.N. action on Korea illegal on two counts: One, the Soviet Union's absence when the vote was taken constituted a veto. Two, China's delegate had no legal right to vote since he did not represent the Communist

government which, the U.S.S.R. delegate claimed, was the legal government of China.

The first count was answered by simply quoting the record. Precedent definitely showed that abstention from voting did not constitute a veto. Frequently the Soviet Union itself had abstained from voting on a "substantive" matter, but the legality of the Security Council's action had not been questioned—by Soviet Russia or any other member. Moreover, the U.S. delegate made it plain that the work of the Security Council should not be paralyzed by deliberate absence.

As to the legality of the vote of the Nationalist Government of China, the record was equally clear. The credentials of the Chinese delegate had been approved by the Council itself, despite the Russians' attempt to have that approval withdrawn.

As a further step, the United States asked Moscow to "use its influence with the North Korean authorities to withdraw their invading forces immediately."

Moscow's answer to this was to charge that the Republic of Korea, not the North Korean forces, had started hostilities and to declare, furthermore, that the Soviet Union would not interfere in the internal problems of other states. This was Moscow's answer despite the factual reports of the U. N. Commission on Korea—direct from Seoul—to the Secretary-General which proved that the Soviet position was utterly false and could have been taken only for propaganda purposes.

the U. N. takes military action

UNDER a resolution introduced by Great Britain, the United Nations on July 7 voted to ask the United States to take on the Unified Command of the world organization's collective effort to put down the Korean aggression. The U.S. Gov-

ernment promptly accepted the responsibility, and President Truman gave the post of Commanding General to Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

Meantime what were now the U.N. forces in Korea fought valiantly to check the powerful military drive of the North Koreans. But all that could be accomplished at this stage was a delaying action, beginning a period of planned withdrawals.

Back in the U.N. New York headquarters on August 1, the Soviet Union's delegate, Jacob Malik, took over the chairmanship of the Security Council. (This is a rotating post.) A prime reason for Malik's return was to try to undo actions the United Nations had taken to put down the North Korean aggressor. Malik began a marathon of invective, aimed principally at the United States. Malik's vituperation was, of course, understandable. Here was the representative of a Communist empire which was bent on world conquest. A principal move in the extension of that empire's holdings was to take over Korea—all of Korea. With the North Koreans as puppets, international communism took to the sword. But then something happened that the masters of communism didn't figure on: the United Nations acted, for the first time, to meet force with force. All necessary Security Council action had been taken before Malik returned from his self-imposed absence. Thus checked, Malik, as chief spokesman in the United Nations for communism, was reduced to invective and the colossal lie.

Then Malik, as Council chairman, managed a procedural tie-up of much of the Council's business during this crucial month. Working under orders from his Government in Moscow, Malik attempted to label the United States as the real aggressor in Korea.

Yet every single delegate in the United Nations knew that one gesture from Moscow, and the fighting in Korea would stop.

U.S. delegate Warren Austin, in a speech before the Council, put it thus:

"The United States has no designs on Korea as a military base, as has been asserted. Events have proved that. We hope some day to see it agreed that no great power will try to dominate a unified Korea. There would be no United States troops—no forces of any of the other United Nations—in Korea today if the North Korean



United Nations troops bombard a Communist-held post with white phosphorus.

authorities had exercised that restraint which the Soviet Union was in a position to suggest to them.

"If now the Soviet Union would exercise its influence, the breach of the peace would be ended forthwith. If now the Soviet Union would decide to respect the independence of its neighbors and live in true friendliness with the rest of the world, if it would prove its words by deeds, the fear that now grips the world would disappear. If that were done, the United Nations then could concentrate its entire efforts on bettering the lot of mankind and waste less of its energies and resources in coping with situations such as that which we face in Korea."

the dark days

WHILE the Soviet delegate continued his tirade against the United States and the West, the month of August 1950 was a dark one for U.N. troops on the battlefields of Korea. Struggling to keep from being enveloped by onrushing North Korean troops, U.N. forces traded space for time and slowly fell back to the small, tight perimeter of Pusan, that vital seaport on the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula.

At U.N. headquarters the Soviet Delegation continued to propose resolutions (all overwhelmingly rejected) naming the Republic of Korea and the United States as the aggressors. This was being done even in the face of the hard facts which the United Nations' own Commission was then reporting from Korea. Said one such report:

" . . . the Commission is unanimously of the opinion that no offensive could possibly have been launched across the parallel by the Republic of Korea. . . . It is the considered opinion of the Commission that this planning and preparation [of North Korean forces] were deliberate, and an essential part of the policy of the North Korean authorities. The objective of this policy was to secure by force what could not be gained by any other means. . . ."

The dark days continued on into September. To many it looked as if the U.N. troops would be forced to abandon Korea. In the Security Council the Soviet delegate kept up a steady drum-fire of accusation against the Republic of Korea, introduced resolutions accusing the American air forces of "barbarous" bombings, and proposed other resolutions calling for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea. These latter resolutions, of course, were to assure complete Communist control of the country.

President Truman, in a major foreign-policy speech, told the American people and the world just what U.S. troops were doing in Korea and what were American objectives in Asia. Key points of the speech were:

"We believe in the United Nations. When we ratified its Charter, we pledged ourselves to seek peace and security through this world organization. We kept our word when we went to the support of the United Nations in Korea two months ago. We shall never go back on that pledge. . . .

"We believe the Koreans have a right to be free, independent, and united—as they want to be. . . .

"We do not want the fighting in Korea to expand into a general war. . . .

"We hope in particular that the people of China will not be misled or forced into fighting against the United Nations. . . .

"We do not want Formosa or any part of Asia for ourselves. . . .

"We believe in freedom for all the nations of the Far East. . . .

"We do not believe in aggressive or preventive war. . . .

"We want peace and we shall achieve it. . . ."

the battle picture changes

ON September 19 the battle picture abruptly and dramatically changed. In a bold maneuver General MacArthur took a large task force of U.N. war vessels and troop ships up the

west coast of Korea and effected a successful landing at Inchon, just a few miles from Seoul. Within 10 days the Government of the Republic of Korea was back in its capital city.

From then on U.N. forces continued successfully to destroy the fighting power of the North Korean forces. Meantime the Unified Command was busy planning the vast, back-breaking task of caring for the civilian population of Korea—the men, women and children who were forced to flee from their homes and suffer incredible hardships because, cruelly and unwarrantedly, warfare had been brought into their lives.

In the council rooms of the U.N. headquarters 10,000 miles away from Korea, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union took the U.N. rostrum. Events in Korea, he declared, can be described only as a civil war between two temporary government camps, and therefore the Charter provisions in regard to aggression are inapplicable.

With the aggressor in Korea apparently on the verge of defeat, the United Nations promptly turned to the task of setting up the machinery for restoration of peace in a unified Korea. To this end the United Nations on October 7 adopted an important resolution recommending that:

“(a) All appropriate steps be taken to ensure conditions of stability throughout Korea;

“(b) All constituent acts be taken, including the holding of elections, under the auspices of the United Nations, for the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic Government in the sovereign State of Korea;

“(c) All sections and representative bodies of the population of Korea, South and North, be invited to cooperate with the organs of the United Nations in the restoration of peace, in the holding of elections and in the establishment of a unified Government;

“(d) United Nations forces should not remain in any part of Korea otherwise than so far as necessary for achieving the objectives specified in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above;

“(e) All necessary measures be taken to accomplish the economic rehabilitation of Korea. . . .”



Warfare disrupted the lives of Korean civilians. This orphan climbs aboard one of 15 U.S. planes used to evacuate 1,000 children from Seoul to southern Korea.

The United Nations also resolved that:

“(a) A Commission consisting of Australia, Chile, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Turkey, to be known as the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea, be established to (i) assume the functions hitherto exercised by the present United Nations Commission in Korea; (ii) represent the United Nations in bringing about the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic government of all Korea; (iii) exercise such responsibilities in connexion with relief and rehabilitation in Korea as may be determined by the General Assembly after receiving the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council. The United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea should proceed to Korea and begin to carry out its functions as soon as possible. . . .”

Chinese communists enter the conflict

DURING the closing days of October 1950 there was every indication that soon peace would return to the 30 million people of Korea and, with this peace, a danger to world security would have been wiped out.

But as the first days of November dawned, this hope diminished. From Unified Command headquarters in Seoul came this message:

“Chinese Communist forces in significant strength have moved across the Yalu River and attacked United Nations forces. This constitutes an act of international lawlessness far exceeding that of mere brigandage. The course of operations of United Nations forces in Korea has in consequence changed from that of pursuit of defeated and routed North Korean army remnants to that of a new campaign against a fresh enemy force.”

The fresh enemy force was, of course, Communist China. Over-



Civilians line the bank of the Han River, near Seoul, fleeing before the Chinese Communists.

whelmed by sheer number of troops, U.N. forces were to face their darkest moments to date.

In the Security Council a resolution was proposed noting the grave situation brought on by Chinese Communist intervention and insisting that no action be taken "which might lead to the spread of the Korean conflict to other areas and thereby further endanger international peace and security." The proposal also stated that "it is the policy of the United Nations to hold the Chinese frontier with Korea inviolate and fully to protect legitimate Chinese and Korean interests in the frontier zone. . . ." The vote on this U.N. resolution was 9 to 1 in favor, but it was killed by the Soviet Union's veto.

Thus the United Nations, from the very beginning of the Chinese Communist intervention, went to full lengths to assure the regime in Peiping and the Chinese people that they need have no fears that Chinese territory would be violated. This same assurance came a few days later from President Truman, speaking for the U. S. Government.

"I can give assurance," he said, "that we support and are acting within the limits of the United Nations policy in Korea, and that we have never at any time entertained any intention to carry hostilities into China. So far as the United States is concerned, I wish to state unequivocally that because of our deep devotion to the cause of world peace and our long-standing friendship for the people of China we will take every honorable step to prevent any extension of the hostilities in the Far East. If the Chinese Communist authorities or people believe otherwise, it can only be because they are being deceived by those whose advantage it is to prolong and extend hostilities in the Far East against the interest of all Far Eastern people. . . ."

Shortly afterward, a representative of Communist China was allowed to appear before the United Nations to discuss the Unified Command's special report on Communist China's intervention in Korea. But the representative, Gen. Wu Hsiu-Chuan, would not discuss the problem of Chinese Communist activities in Korea. Under the prodding of the Soviet Delegation, General Wu was con-

cerned only with having the United Nations condemn "United States aggression in China and Korea," and "American invasion in Formosa."

Meantime the Chinese Communists were pouring more and more men onto the battlefields of Korea. The U.N. Command's reports put the estimated number of Chinese Communist forces as high as 400,000 men. U.N. troops continued their withdrawals to a stable battleline where their superior fire power would offset the numerical superiority of Chinese Communist manpower.

Prime Minister Clement Attlee of Great Britain made a hurried trip to Washington on December 4 to consult with President Truman. Their views were expressed in a joint statement, which read in part:

"We are in complete agreement that there can be no thought of appeasement or of rewarding aggression. . . .

"For our part we are ready, as we have always been, to seek an end to the hostilities by means of negotiation. The same principles of international conduct should be applied to this situation as are applied, in accordance with our obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, to any threat to world peace. . . ."

cease-fire attempts— that failed

AS the end of 1950 approached, 13 Arab-Asian nations* introduced a new resolution. This called for the President of the General Assembly to appoint a Committee of Three, including himself, to map out a basis for a satisfactory cease-fire order in Korea and make its recommendations to the General Assembly. This resolution was approved by the General Assembly on December 14.

*Afghanistan, Burma, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen.

The Committee of Three immediately went to work. They came up with a list of principles:

All fighting in all of Korea to stop

A demilitarized area, following the general line of the 38th parallel, to be established

Forces to remain in position or withdraw to the rear

Prisoners of war to be exchanged

Provisions to be made for the security of forces, the movement of refugees, etc.

Supervision of the cease-fire to be directed by a U.N. Commission, which should have access to all of Korea

This basis for the cease-fire discussion seemed fair and reasonable to the Committee of Three, and it was acceptable to the Unified Command. But the Chinese Communist authorities in Peiping turned it down. Reasons? There were two, it seems.

First, Peiping said, it had repeatedly declared that it would regard as illegal and null and void any U.N. resolution which might be "adopted by the United Nations without the participation and approval of its own representative."

Second, the United Nations had not voted favorably on the "complaint against the United States armed aggression against Taiwan (Formosa)" and the "complaint of the U.S. aggression against China. . . ."

This turn-down came in response not to any U.N. order or fixed rules but merely to a statement to be used as a "basis for discussion" to effect a cease-fire.

Meantime the armed forces of Communist China were swooping down on Seoul and a few days later occupied it. Among some U.N. members the cease-fire idea persisted. The United States was dubious that any honorable cease-fire arrangements could be worked out with Communist China. Other nations had other ideas. So in mid-January the cease-fire group presented a supplementary report containing five principles for the achievement by stages of a settlement of Far Eastern problems. The First Committee of the General Assembly approved these principles on January 13, 1951, and invited the chairman of that Committee to transmit the principles to the Peiping authorities.

The statement of principles called for an immediate cease-fire with safeguards; the withdrawal by stages of all non-Korean forces from the country; democratic elections according to U.N. principles; appropriate interim arrangements for the administration of Korea; and, as soon as agreement was reached on a cease-fire, the setting up by the General Assembly of an appropriate body, including among others, representatives of the United States, the U.S.S.R., the United Kingdom, and Communist China, with a view to reaching a settlement of Far Eastern problems. The United States, despite its skepticism over this latest proposal, nevertheless voted for it. The reasons were summed up by the Secretary of State:

“It [the cease-fire proposal] had the support of the overwhelming majority of the U.N. members. This support was founded on two principal attitudes. One was the belief of many members that the Chinese Communists might still be prevailed upon to cease their defiance of the United Nations. While we did not share this belief, we recognized that it was sincerely held by many members.

“The second attitude was that, even though there might be little prospect of success in the approach to Peiping, the United Nations should leave no stone unturned in its efforts to find a peaceful solution. Holders of each view believed and stated to us that opposition or abstention by the United States would destroy any possibility of success which the proposal might have.

“Peaceful settlement is one of the cardinal purposes of the United Nations. The resort to force in Korea came from the North Koreans first and the Chinese Communists second. The United Nations has constantly demanded that this should end and that the United Nations objectives should be attained by peaceful means—we have stood and still stand for this position. Also it has been our goal to so act as to maintain the unity of the free nations against aggression which has marked the United Nations actions in Korea. Accordingly, we voted for the resolution to demonstrate our adherence to these basic principles even though we did not share the beliefs of other members . . . that it would achieve its purposes.”

To the Soviet Union the U.N. cease-fire proposals were “nebulous,” and Communist China just bluntly turned them down. Instead of the cease-fire principles the Chinese Communists—and the

Soviets—would negotiate first, then talk about cease-fire, and this only after the Chinese Communists were seated in U.N. councils.

The Communist position was, to the great majority of the members of the United Nations, too much like blackmail, too much like an open invitation to an aggressor to start a conflict and then negotiate to stop it—on his terms.

the aggressor named

IT was at this stage of the conflict that the U.S. Delegation led the move to name Communist China an aggressor. The United States thought it should have been done earlier but had deferred to other U.N. members who were hesitant to take this step, although they had no doubt that Communist China was an aggressor. Again a small group of U.N. members honestly feared such a move would have damaging repercussions in the Far East. But the overwhelming majority of the United Nations agreed with the U.S. delegate that “The time to draw the line is now.”

Thus, on February 1, 1951, the United Nations passed a resolution which—

“NOTING that the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China has not accepted United Nations proposals to bring about a cessation of hostilities in Korea with a view to peaceful settlement, and that its armed forces continue their invasion of Korea and their large-scale attacks upon United Nations forces there;

“Finds that the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China, by giving direct aid and assistance to those who were already committing aggression in Korea and by engaging in hostilities against United Nations forces there, has itself engaged in aggression in Korea. . . .”

In the same resolution, the United Nations repeated its position that “the policy of the United Nations [is] to bring about a cessation of hostilities in Korea by peaceful means.” To this end, a Good

Offices Committee was formed for any honorable approach the Chinese Communists might want to make.

The Chinese Communists' answer was to call the U.N. resolution "an utter perversion of the truth" and to declare the resolution null and void. Furthermore, Peiping would have nothing to do with the "illegal" Good Offices Committee.

Later, on May 18, 1951, the United Nations adopted a new weapon against the aggressors—an embargo on the shipment of arms and war materials to Communist China and Communist-dominated North Korea. The Soviet Union, of course, opposed this embargo. And even though the Soviet Union is the main source of the Chinese Communists' war equipment and materials, such an embargo, already put into effect by the United States, can be a serious blow to the aggressors if fully applied by other nations.

Meantime 15 other nations have landed troops on the peninsula of Korea to fight alongside U.S. and South Korean forces: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, Turkey, the Union of South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

How well these troops, from 17 different nations, have come together to fight a common aggressor was summed up by U. S. Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall on his return from a visit to the battlefield in early June 1951. General Marshall said that he was *much impressed with the complete amalgamation of the various United Nations units fighting in Korea into an integrated, coordinated fighting force.*

U. S. and U. N. objectives

THE first year of the Korea conflict is now at an end. What has the U.N. accomplished during this year? Has this collective action been worth the sacrifices? What is gained by the policy of meeting the aggressor firmly, while at the same time trying to localize the conflict?

On April 11, 1951, President Truman once again voiced U.S. and U.N. objectives with these words:

"The question we have had to face is whether the Communist plan of conquest can be stopped without general war. Our Government and other countries associated with us in the United Nations believe that the best chance of stopping it without general war is to meet the attack in Korea and defeat it there. . . .

"So far, by fighting a limited war in Korea, we have prevented aggression from succeeding and bringing on a general war. And the ability of the whole free world to resist Communist aggression has been greatly improved. . . .

"In the meantime, I want to be clear about our military objective. We are fighting to resist an outrageous aggression in Korea. We are trying to keep the Korean conflict from spreading to other areas. . . .

"That is our military objective—to repel attack and to restore peace."

In some ways the limited-war concept is a new one. Its newness may account for the fact that many people have been honestly baffled by it. It becomes plain, however, if one remembers that the United Nations went into Korea to protect a free, independent nation from aggression. The U.N. idea was to stop that aggression and restore peace.

This is the heart of the U.N. policy.

For over a year the United Nations has struggled to put down an aggression, to keep it from spreading into a disastrous world war. If despite this effort war comes, it will be because the Communist rulers, as President Truman said, "want it to come."

"But this Nation and its allies," the President has said, "will not be responsible for its coming. We do not want to widen the conflict. We will use every effort to prevent that disaster. And in so doing we know that we are following the great principles of peace, freedom, and justice."

When its objectives in Korea have been achieved, the United Nations believes a monumental example will have been set to deter any other would-be aggressor. An extension of the Korean conflict would take the United Nations far afield of its objectives and might

make all efforts to achieve a just settlement of the conflict, as it now stands, all but impossible. Worse, an extension of the conflict might bring on World War III.

Ambassador Austin, in a speech on April 30, 1951, summed up U.N. aims in Korea with these two sentences:

“Militarily, the objective is to repel the aggression and restore international peace and security in the area.

“Politically, the objective is to establish a unified, independent and democratic government in the sovereign state of Korea.”

The United Nations is determined that these objectives must and will be achieved. This fateful year of the Korean conflict has already brought forth a notable list of accomplishments. In the same April 30 speech, Ambassador Austin outlined them thus:

“The Korean conflict has unmasked the Soviet’s phony world-wide ‘peace’ offensive.

“It has exposed the Soviet designs for conquest on the installment plan.

“It has upset the Soviet timetable for new conquests on the Korean pattern.

“The Korean conflict has rallied the first collective force and action behind United Nations principles.

“It has stimulated the United Nations to develop new machinery and better methods for meeting future threats.

“It has brought the free world to a new peak of unity in the United Nations.

“But, most important of all:

“The Korean conflict has alerted people all over the world to the imminent dangers of Soviet aggression.

“It has strengthened the will of nations to stand together and resist aggression.

“It has aroused the free peoples to the necessity of mobilizing their strength for defense, and may thus have saved civilization. . . .”

These words took on an extra meaning in July 1951 as representatives of the Unified Command met with Communist Chinese and North Korean military spokesmen to discuss terms for an armistice.

